

INTERVIEWEE: Mark Saia  
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INTERVIEWER: Judy Lynn  
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Judy: This is Judy Lynn and I'm here at the Island County Historical Society with Mark Saia and Mark is going to tell us about how we got the Suva back to Coupeville. So, Mark, I want to ask you where and when you were born.

Mark: I was born in 1962 in San Jose, California.

Judy: Okay. All right.

Mark: Yes, grew up there in San Jose the Bay Area, Santa Cruz, and boated all my life, my first sailboat I bought was in Santa Cruz. So, I grew up there.

Judy: Okay, all right. And I know that your dad owns the Coupeville Inn.

Mark: Yes.

Judy: And is that how you got to Whidbey?

Mark: Yes, in 1980, He traded a 41 foot sailboat for a lot on Race Lagoon. And he knew nothing about clearing a lot. He had three acres. He traded a boat for this, which was a good deal to him as a developer and built his first house on Whidbey Island.

From there, he built a house in Coupeville and moved close to town, and then he bought the inn. It was about '06 when I came to visit. I'd been running boats in the Caribbean for four years in the East Coast. And he wanted to do a stay and sail program with the Coupeville Inn, so he bought a brand-new Catalina Morgan 440.

Judy: Okay.

Mark: And I was like a King salmon going for that big lure because it was a beautiful boat. And that was my summer gig coming here during the summers and leaving the Caribbean and the hurricane season in July.

Judy: Good idea.

Mark: Yeah, we went through one of them there going over from Puerto Rico over to St. Thomas. We hit the hurricanes. We had to hide out in the mangroves on Calibra, an island between The BVI's and Puerto Rico, that was the last time we did that.

Any way, it was 2006 when I came here and started running boats and ran Leisure Yacht Charters with the Catalina morgan 44 for seven years during the summer.

Judy: The one that he bought.

Mark: The one that he bought: Andiamo, Italian for let's go, it was a brand new 2007 Catalina Morgan 440.

I was running that boat for seven years till 2013-14. It was a business, a great summer captaining gig. My dad decided that it was time to sell, running boats here is a short season.

Judy: Oh.

Mark: So, he sold the boat. I bought a smaller sailboat to keep teaching and sailing in Penn Cove. We started out with leisure yacht charters with the 440 Morgan That was the bigger boat. And then when he sold that, I started Penn Cove sailing and started teaching sailing in the cove on a Catalina 22. I got really busy, and I needed a bigger boat. So, it was in 2014, after he sold the boat, I was thinking what am I going to do? We're in a historic town. I jumped in the tender; I went in the middle of the cove on a calm day. I just lay there, and I was thinking, I'm asking the cove gods. What should I do? And I had a vision of a historic boat.

Judy: Wow.

Mark: How about an old boat, maybe an old schooner would be great in Coupeville for me to run as a charter boat. I immediately went home, went on Craigslist looking for a schooner, and Suva popped up on Craigslist. The picture of her, the boat itself looked like my great-grandfather's boats that were in San Francisco. The fishing boats that I grew up around when I was a kid, the fishing boat had the exact same pilot house. I was enthralled by the look of her on Craigslist. I called up Lloyd Baldwin. He was the owner at the time. And I made an appointment to go see Schooner Suva. The boat was in over in Port Townsend in the marina. So, I went over

there, me and my dad, we took a look, and I fell in love with her. And at that point, I did not know she was Frank Pratt's last yacht he had made. I had no idea I never knew she came from Coupeville; it all was very serendipity.

Judy: Wow.

Mark: I said, "Dad, we have to buy her. It's only \$105,000." And Andiamo is \$400,000. How can we go wrong? Little did I know how much it really would cost to certify a 100-year-old boat. It took five years to get her certified by the Coast Guard. The reason Lloyd couldn't really make his charter business work as well is because it was a six-pack for small group charters.

Judy: It was a what?

Mark: It was an uninspected vessel. So, the Coast Guard calls that a six-pack.

Judy: Okay.

Mark: You only carry six people. And that doesn't pay for a 100-year-old boat, for the work it needs. So, when we went and saw her my dad said, "I don't think it's a good idea, you'll die working on the boat." I said, "But it's an amazing boat." So, I came home with pictures and met Lee James. He knew about a boat, Lee says, I think that boat was from here. So, Lee did some research and sure enough, Frank Pratt owned the boat. So, I immediately called the tall ship Lady Washington and talked to them a little bit about how they formed the organization. I got their articles and everything to form the organization.

Judy: What organization?

Mark: The Coupeville Maritime Heritage Foundation. So, that was the first thing I started the Coupeville Maritime Heritage Foundation. I wrote the articles. Wrote the bylaws. I did all of that to form the organization.

Judy: As a nonprofit.

Mark: As a nonprofit. Yeah, that's when Vickie Chambers came on board and helped me.

Judy: Is it a 501(c)(3)?

Mark: Yes, It's a 501(c)(3). Yeah, and it all started out that way. I asked Loyd to bring her here in 2014, he brought her on the dock during a water festival, so she was on the dock with some posters I made for people to see and get excited about us bringing Schooner Suva Home!

Judy: Tell me about bringing her here. Did you sail her over?

Mark: Lloyd brought her over for the first time in May 2014. I didn't bring her over until 2015 when we bought her. I delivered her from Port Townsend to Coupeville. I ran her for the first five years teaching everybody how to sail and run her. And doing all the work on her I could do, in the winter when she was in the yard in Oak Harbor and when Suva was over in Anacortes at Emerald Marine. The owner Andy loved the boat he'd worked on before; he and his crew have been our shipwrights for 10 years. Andy and I devised a plan to make her a Coast Guard certified. I brought the Coast Guard to her over in Port Townsend and asked if we can certify Schooner Suva. They said it might take some time and a lot of money. I was an instructor for "American Sailing Association" the ASA, I'm also a teacher of Tai-Chi and many martial arts. I like to empower people, and sailing does that when you teach sailing to somebody to use the wind and harness Mother Nature, it's an empowering thing, just like teaching them martial arts, to empower you. I think we all should empower each other! Like Schooner Suva gives you when you are on board. It was an amazing thing getting her here, teaching everybody. I remember Little Bear; he was one of our first members and volunteer crew. He came up in a kayak. He said, "Well, that's a cool boat. Can I come aboard? After that he was hooked, just like I was with my Catalina; he made it all the way up to a boatswain.

Judy: What's his name?

Mark: Stephen Littlebear.

Mark: He moved back to Alaska, so he's not here anymore, but it's just amazing how Suva has attracted and drawn our community to her, it takes a village, you know, to keep her going. I did a lot myself during the first five years, when I first found her, I was separated. I was going to live on her, and then I met Jackie Calkins, a teacher in Coupeville. We got married eight years ago on-board Schooner Suva.

My whole vision of schooner Suva was to be here forever, whether I was or not. I did not think she should be owned by anyone. I'm her founder, her caretaker, I love her, I know her better than anybody. I'll do anything for her, even risk my life! I thought she needed to grow organically into our town.

Judy: Yeah, okay.

Mark: So, my Penn Cove sailing and leisure yacht charter business that I made my income from, I couldn't do that anymore cause Suva needed to receive all the money sailing and chartering in Penn Cove. So, I started my company, Island Quality Construction. I have been doing construction in my spare time on Whidbey and Anacortes for 18 years now. I do remodels, I do custom bathrooms. I'm working on the Haller House, restoring that. Restoration and remodel expert. I loved working on Suva and restoring her.

Judy: I'm glad to know that.

Mark: Yeah. So that's my business now, and I had to let Suva take and earn all the charter income and business in Penn Cove. So, I put my charter companies on the back burner. Although on my websites, I kept them up and when people would call me, I would refer them to Schooner Suva. So, when people called my businesses, I would give it to Suva, it was and still is hard for me to give up sailing Suva. And she had just grown that way.

Judy: Okay. David told me how you paid for her. Tell me that story.

Mark: Well, it was a rally to fund her, Loyd gave me a month to come up with an offer and the funding, so I went to my father and my good friend Dr. Wiley Vraycin. Wiley and Jenne donated \$50,000. My dad and the Coupeville Inn donated \$10,000. And then I worked with Mark Mao from People's, and I convinced him to loan us the other \$50,000. The haul out was good for the insurance. I made the offer we needed, the \$105,000. I took Wiley, and a film crew to look at the boat when I had Suva hauled out of the water for a survey and Coast Guard inspection over in Port Townsend,

Judy: Wow. So, Wiley knew the director of the People's Bank?

Mark: I knew Mark Mao. I brought it all to Mark Mao.

Judy: Oh, you did? Okay. That was you.

Mark: Yes, that all me, I brought it to Mark Mao. I brought it to People's Bank.

Mark: When I started the foundation, it was all my idea! I went to the bank and asked "Mark, we need \$55,000, can we do this?" And most banks normally don't, that for a 100-year-old vessel. Mark knew I had the experience and had been running my charter business since 2007 and I knew the potential for making a good income, I put together a business plan with the cash flow analysis and gave it to Mark, they were convinced and took the chance and knew that I could do it. Suva is paid for now, but that's how we bought the boat. We've probably spent \$3-400,000 up to date, plus getting her Coast Guard certified. You know, in 10 years, we've done a lot of work, major, major work. I've been there every second of it, in the yard and at Oak Harbor. I had to disassemble interior Teak planking on the forward cabins. I pulled all the planking off all the walls. I had to remove the chain plate that the wire shrouds connect to them they keep the forward mast up. I expose and rebuild the interior. We had to cut and replace planks on the starboard side, replace interior structure called shelving, that's in behind all of that. And then once that was fixed, I put the interior all back together. Got her all back and tidy. Buying her was... it always was so meant to be.

Judy: Yeah.

Mark: You know my whole idea was to have an educational boat, for teaching and empowering kids and everyone who boarded her, tourists and locals to come and have a step back in time and relax and unwind. That was my line: step back in time, to sail on that boat. And as an educator, I've taught kids and people sailing. So, I wanted to bring kids on the boat. I worked for the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California on the research vessel, the Derek M Baylis. It was built by a friend of mine, a 65-foot research vessel. We did a science under sail with them. That was my model.

Judy: Okay

Mark: To bring Suva here and do some science under sail classes and have the kids on the boat. So now, this week Suva and the crew have been down in Cornet Bay, doing training all week with kids and Suva also goes down to Langly for some kid's trips on the Suva.

Judy: Oh, really?

Mark: Yeah, that's the neatest thing. It was the second year or so I took to Waldorf kids, 20 Waldorf kids. We went to Friday Harbor, Sucia island, Stewart Island, and Spencer's spit on a sail trip for a week. We had a National Geographic underwater photographer on board. Chris Burke set it all up, and Susie, they worked with South Whidbey Schools. It was amazing, we had the best time! Although we weren't quite certified yet, it all worked out just fine. Everywhere we stopped overnight the kids went to the shore and camped, I would alternate keeping a few kids on board for the night watch, it was good way to study the stars, we had a great time. The kids loved it. We came back home a week later through Deception Pass; it was a calm day with light winds. We had all the sails up slowly sailing along, so I jumped in the small boat we towed and ran around Suva taking pictures of the kids and the boat.

Judy: Oh, you were captaining that trip.

Mark: Yes, I was, I took Chris as a co-captain and crew. I captained that trip, I was aboard for everything up until around five years ago, I had to step aside and quit being Suva's lead captain because I have some medical issues and numbness in my feet that I've dealt with. The doctors thought I had MS or Transvers myelitis. Apparently, I have severe spinal stenosis in my neck, As a master martial art instructor stunt guy I land on my head too many times and neck pinched nerves but should be ok as long as I'm careful. So, I managed the acquisition of Schooner Suva and the whole experience of buying her was amazing, getting her here, and getting her 501(c)(3) status that Vicky Chambers helped me out with. She helped me put it together.

Judy: Okay, good.

Mark: Vicky is amazing and a great friend, she was my right hand, she had experience with nonprofits working with the city, so that's why she was with us on the first board. I took the vice president's spot but, I had to give that up to Jim Green, because I was going to captain Suva and there was a conflict of interest if I was on the board getting paid, but I've never taken one dollar from running schooner Suva, I can't do it... I just can't, I brought her here and spent 100s of

volunteer hours along with many other people who love Schooner Suva as much as I do! So now we have many new captains on the boat, and we also now have a female captain, they all do get paid a couple hundred dollars per 2-hour cruise.

Judy: Okay, good.

Mark: You know I just couldn't take anything, so I need to quit being a captain on Suva... I have a family, so I had to start my construction company "Island Quality Construction" I have responsibilities, and I'm not retired yet. It didn't feel right for me to take any income away from her, because I brought her here.

Judy: Sure, she's your baby. She's 100 years old baby.

Mark: You know, I worked on her, got her Coast Guard certified for 29 passengers aboard, that was the best number for school groups. It has been three years now since I brought my mom here to Coupeville.

Judy: Oh, you did?

Mark: Yes, I found her a great doctor in Anacortes Island Hospital, She got a new knee, and new hip, she's now lives at my duplex here in Coupeville next to my daughter and grand kids. I'm going to get her on board this year. So, the two old grand old ladies will meet.

Judy: So you rescued her. Tell me that story.

Mark: That day there was gale force winds and gusting over 30 knots. We had Suva out on the mooring ball in front of the pier; we put her out there to keep her off the dock, because when the wind blows the docks, it moves like an accordion snake, and it's not good for her. So, I put her out there, tied her on the mooring ball, and I even went out and grabbed one more of her old dock lines, and made an extra line. We had three lines on the mooring ball. I was down South Island at a baseball tournament with my wife and my stepdaughter. And the whirlwinds down in South Whidbey High School... it was just tornado... It was a low pressure wind and I was thinking I hope Suva was okay, I tied her up... So, we left there around 4:30 after that game and headed home. We got home and I noticed it's still super windy. I saw Suva out there, bouncing and bucking. I got



home and I'm checking the weather, and it looks like it was going to get worse. And just as soon as I got done checking the weather, I got a ring from [Larry owner of Vales], "Mark, Suva just broke free. " And this was kind of a dusk... I was across the cove. I live on Monroe landing.

Judy: Oh, so you were back here.

Mark: We had just got back home. I jumped in my truck, raced as quick as I could. 70 miles an hour down Madrona with my heart in my throat! I Jumped in the only thing we had was our 10-foot little ribbed tender with a 9.9 horsepower mercury.

Judy: Okay.

Mark: By the time I got to the pier all I could see was Suva out in the distance, heading towards Bowers Bluff. The waves were the biggest I have seen in the cove ever! So, without regard to my own life I jumped in the tender and chased her down all the way across the cove. By that time it was probably blowing 40 + knots with gust over 50. There were waves, 5-6 foot and white caps, I almost got rolled a few times, because I was going a beam to the waves, the wind was coming out the west. I shot out after her, at that she was going about three knots. She was bear pulling, we call that, and sailing without sails... Bear is a naked bear. There's no sails. Because the design of Schooner Suva's hull like a airfoil, so when you get that much wind blowing, it acts like a wing on a plan, and it will move forwards.

Judy: Without sails?

Mark: Without sails, because of the shape of the hull has that wing effect. So, it was going three knots, heading right towards Bowers Buff, right towards the rocks. As I was chasing her, I was watching Suva rocking and rolling thinking how I would get on board. So, I grab the line on the tender, it is called a painter. I gave it some throttle, got behind her and I grabbed her rail in the stern. I jumped up and pulled myself up between the two safety lines and tied the tender off quick. Look where we're going at the cliff. I had no time to do anything before Suva hit the rocks, the helm station was all covered with the cover so I just turned the wheel hard to starboard with the cover and everything. pop, pop, pop. Here goes, all the cover clips. And I turned to the right

(starboard) Suva turned away. and headed down the Saratoga passage. My heart stopped pounding as I opened the cabin and started the engine.

Judy: With the light on your phone.

Mark: Yes, I turned on the navigation lights because it was getting dark! It was blowing, like, crazy. At that point, I turned Suva to the west and started heading up the cove to the Captain Whidbey Inn. By now I see these rescue lights coming at me. The sheriff's rescue boat was coming; they came to me, and it looked like the perfect storm. The waves were going over them. "You need any help?" I said "No, I got it. I'm ok. Thank you." I'm just going to take her to the end and drop her hook. It took me around two hours to get to the end, it was blowing so hard, I could barely make any headway. And all I could see was a little bit of light on the mussel farm rafts.

Judy: So it was blowing from the west.

Mark: Blowing from the west. The wind was so strong I was getting sprayed on behind the cabin, the waves and spray were coming over in my face, I could not go below in the cabin the winds were all awash with wave spray!

Judy: Wow. Oh, wow.

Mark: It felt like the time I was delivering a 47-foot catamaran from Puerto Rico to the British Virgin Islands in front of a hurricane. The wind and waves were the same, at least it was warm there. All I could do on Suva was stay on and out of the wind and spray, I got soaked and a bit hypothermic. My dad was at Captain Whidbey Inn with a flashlight, but I could not see it. I thought about bringing her back to the Pier, but It was not possible. So, I headed west into the darkness, it was one of the most empowering things I have ever done on the ocean. I knew Suva and I were safe now. It was hard to keep Suva heading west into the wind, she kept getting blown from one side to the other in the gusts of 50 knots+ I was going maybe three knots max... After it felt like about two hours and getting very dark, I saw a light at the end of a mussel farm raft. From there I had to turn north to the Captain Whidbey Inn and look for my dad's light.

Judy: Oh, so he knew you were out there.

Mark: Yeah, yeah, everybody knew I was out there. But by that time all they could do was watch from the pier and pray. There was no time for anybody else to help me. I had to go get her. And I couldn't let her go on the rocks. So, you know, five more minutes, she would have been on the rocks over there. She may have been damaged, beyond repair in those waves and the wind. Or major repair, so I couldn't let our lovely Schooner Suva get stranded on the rocks. So, yeah, I got her to the end of the cove and dropped the anchor. Captain Johnny came out and spent the night on her, and I went home and jumped in the hot tub to warm up.

Judy: John Stone?

Mark: No, Johnny Johnson. He's one of our captains. He was around in the beginning, a good captain. He's a great guy. He's like a brother. Everyone here is like my family although I think I feel that more than anyone else, that's just me... Captain Johnny took time to go overseas for a little bit. He works with the Navy. He's back being a captain for the foundation again, he is a great captain and steward to Suva! I can't wait till the full circle and the day I have time to do some trips with him.

Judy: All right.

Mark: What was kind of crazy is that there was a 37 foot sailboat that was out on a mooring ball in the cove behind Suva 200 yards called the Bucket List, It was a nice older sailboat. So, by this time the owner was just getting in his bunk, when he saw out a porthole in his cabin Schooner Suva bearing down. When Suva broke free, she drifted back at first until the wind caught her, then she started sailing and ran into Bucket List, the boat hitting the bow. He was in his 80s and didn't know what was happening, he thought that we were on-board Suva and accidentally hit his boat and ran...He called 911

Judy: Is this when she first broke free?

Mark: Yes, before Suva started headed across. The rescue people went and saved him first, that was no easy task, because they had to launch their rescue boat in the storm. The launch ramp in Coupeville faces west. They got him out of his boat and that was probably a very difficult task because he was an older guy

about in his 80s, the sheriff rescue got him to shore and then they came out to rescue Suva. They did not know anyone was on her, so I think they were going to try to rescue Schooner Suva from her demise.

Judy: And you had already rescued Suva?

Mark: I couldn't let Schooner Suva go on the rocks. Yeah. I just couldn't do it, you know, and again it was one of the craziest things I have ever done! I've been in a lot of stuff in the ocean you know, this was the second time I didn't know if I was going to make it out alive as I was chasing Suva down in the storm. I've sailed in the tail end of hurricanes, on the west coast rounding Point Conception, I ran from Hurricane Sandy down the inter costal from Carolina and found a safe marina in Baltimore Harbor, you know, up and down the California coast, and that was one of the... that was a really surreal experience, you know, it'd make a good movie.

Judy: It would. It would. It makes a great story.

Mark: Yeah, you know, I'm a producer too, and I was a movie guy in California and do a media factoring an editor at a digital media factory. Yeah, we had the old Wrigley's factory in Santa Cruz, California, and that was our studio. We had huge space, and we made some movies and exercise DVD's Anyway, that was another life. Yeah. You know? So I'd like to get James Hong. He's a character actor from Way Back, an acquaintance of mine. I'd like to make a movie about Suva leaving the Dock with a group of people and the fog rolls in and they come back to the dock and it's 1925. I think Mr. Pratt would be happy she is back where she belongs!

Judy: Yeah, you didn't know her history when you bought her.

Mark: No, I had no idea, But I'm a believer in things are meant to be, you know.

Judy: Yeah, how did you find out that it was Frank Pratt that had her built?

Mark: Lee James. He was a historian, our local historian.

Judy: I know Lee.

Mark: He said, "I think that's the Pratt boat. "No way What? Whose boat?" And sure enough, Suva's history and design notes are still here in the old Pratt house library, and I've been up there to Frank's house. Ron Hanson lives in the Pratt house. I've been up there, and we took pictures and some videos.

Judy: And was this before?

Mark: This was when I first found Schooner Suva in PT and formed the Coupeville Maritime Heritage foundation. Then it all came together, and the rest is history. I'm so honored to have been the one to find Schooner Suva and start this organization.

Ron invited us to have some get togethers up there and everything but we have not yet. It would be neat. But That's where he lives.

Judy: That's where Frank lived.

Mark: I know Suva is in good hands. The people and the community here, young and old, along with all the crew and captains are so amazing! That's what I love so much about being here! I will always be here for Schooner Suva and singing her song. It has been hard to step back for the past four years to help and take care of myself and family. I knew Suva was going to be able to make her way with me in the background, making sure everything will be ok. It's a good organization and I love seeing her every day from my house and the beach across the Cove. It is strange that half the people don't know me.

Judy: They should. Well, they will now with this history.

Mark: Yeah, I'm a kind of a sap with a big heart, you know, I'm a black belt martial art master, I can defend myself very well, but I'm a healer. My studio was a Healing Arts Academy. So, I teach martial arts for healing and for wellness of yourself. So that was my thing.

Judy: Okay.

Mark: My heart has been broken by the currant board, and that makes it hard to even sing the Schooner Suva song, I get choked up. We're supposed to sing it tomorrow. And I sing a

solo in the song "Lovely Schooner Suva" I did ok at practice yesterday, but it is hard, I'm very heartfelt and I get it choked up, even singing that song because of how I feel in my heart, and how I feel about Suva.

Judy: How did you get involved with the Shifty Sailors?

Mark: Uh, Wiley Vracin has been my dad's buddy and best friend when he first came here. He was his doctor. So, the Vracin's are my second family here. I spent Thanksgivings and Christmases with them. They are my second family. My mom was in California, so I could not go to see her. And then Wiley said, "You know, you ought to come sing with Shifties." So, I went and sang with them and just kept singing, it's been like 15 years now. I've been to the East Coast with them. I didn't go out of the country with them and would have been fun. But the East Coast was great. And I kind of moved up to playing rhythm guitar because I love playing music! I have been playing guitar all my life. And I just love it. I love the sea shanties, and it's great. I'm going to start doing some busking, some of my own stuff, but it is just finding the time.

Judy: Yeah.

Mark: I've got my daughter here now, my mom's here, three grandkids.

Judy: Tell me the name of your wife.

Mark: Jackie Calkins-Saia. She's a teacher in Coupeville at the high school.

Judy: Okay. And she's got a daughter, and you have a stepdaughter. What's her name?

Mark: Tegan Calkins. Remember that name she is a super star student and a great athlete for Coupeville High school. She's a volleyball player and a basketball player. She's a softball player. She's the catcher. She's in the academics... one of the highest academics in Coupeville. She's a junior this year. They went to state for their softball. Last year, they went to state for volleyball, and she's... you'll hear a lot of Teagan Calkins. She's a rock star. She's amazing athlete, smarter than all get out, and I don't know how she does that with what she eats, but I don't know. You know kids. Yeah, I was young once too.

So, Jackie, when we met that kind of pulled me away from Suva a little bit more. But again, I kind of wanted her to grow organically. And I knew that once I got everything rolling and made sure Schooner Suva was going to be okay, I stepped back to running my business and getting married.

Judy: You're talking about Suva.

Mark: Yeah, So, it's been eight years. We've been married now for 8 years. Schooner Suva was first here for a weekend in May 2014 when we brought her to Coupeville for the first time, and it was 2015 when I put it all together made the offer and sailed her home Three or four years after I got her and was working on her and stuff. That's when I met Jackie and I fell in love!

Judy: I think Lynne Weynand married you on Suva

Mark: That was the most special thing.

Judy: Yeah. It really was. I observed it. David Young and I went down to Port Orchard to interview Vicki, who's coming up for the party, and she and her husband owned her for years. Holly was there and was hired by the nonprofit Suva to write the application to get her on the historic register.

Mark: I had worked on that for years before and stuff to try and get her on the historic register. Jim Green at the time to present thought it was going to kind of put her in a different category, so it was kind of back and forth on what the board felt comfortable with. But once I was out, I wasn't even on the board anymore, they got her application finally finished and got Suva registered, I have not met her. I'm glad, I love her for doing it. She will get a big hug from me!

Judy: Well, she's going to complete it and then she'll be on the historic register cause she's old. She should be.

Mark: She should be. You know, and she was built in Hong Kong. She wasn't built in our Blanchard boatyard where Red Jacket was, the other Ted Geary boat. CMHF we were going to be given Red Jacket. Do you know what Red Jacket is? It's a 1920s Schooner that was down in Tacoma, and it was up for sale. She is one of the most beautiful, sleek Schooner, Black hull, Red Jacket was next to us in the boat shows in Tacoma she was right next to us. Red Jacket.

He' was going to donate Red jacket to us.

Judy: Wow.

Mark: But the board did not want the responsibilities. But I went and hauled her out. I spent my time and money, \$1,000, hauled it out. We're looking at it, brought the guys to look at it the original owner sold it to a guy who's going to buy it. He ended up taking all the good stuff off, painted it white and he was going to steal the boat. But when I was going to get it, it was still red jacket, and it would have been two Ted Geary schooners in our cove.

Judy: Okay. Who is Ted Geary?

Mark: Ted Geary is a Seattle native. He was a naval architect. He grew up in Seattle back in the 40s. He sailed; he designed boats. and that was his thing. He designed Sir Tom. It was like one of the fastest old, schooner racing boats at the time. And he was a naval architect, so everything he built was stout. So, he built Suva, very strong and stout, and that's what prompted the Coast Guard to say, "Yeah, I think you could make her certified."

Judy: Oh, he built her?

Mark: He designed her.

Judy: Oh, he designed her.

Mark: Gary designed her. She was built in Hong Kong at the shipyard in Hong Kong. The old growth Burmese tea. With a Ted Geary design. I have his plans and stuff, yeah, it's neat. I have so much neat stuff on her.

Judy: I bet you do. Okay. Is there anything else that you want to add?

Mark: You know, it's just been an honor and a privilege to have brought her here back to Coupeville. I came here, I say, it's '07-'06 Love the place. Love the people and community, you know to me, I love living on boats, so being in Coupeville, I am living on a boat. Everybody's waving. But yeah, I'm just honored, I'm honored to have brought her here, I'm honored to be part of this town and part of our culture on our maritime heritage. You know, I'm a rebel rouser and a



maritime guy. You know, some call me a loose cannon, but, you know, I'm the one who found Suva, and I really think that it takes somebody with an imagination, drive and more ambition than the rest, to get something done, and that's me.

Judy: Okay. I want to thank you for bringing her here.

Mark: All right so. you're so welcome, and I'm so...

Judy: I've been on her three times for special events.

Mark: Yeah. I'll tell you, one day I was leaving her after a great sail, I was buttoning her up for the night She was on the wharf, and I was kind of a stormy night, and I'm always talking to her. As I'm locking the door and getting off the boat I saw in the back window on the pilot house, an old man in a hat in that back window looking out at me, it was Pratt. It was Frank. Yeah. It was Frank. I swear to God, I saw this old man in a hat. And the same hat my great-grandfather used to wear, and I have seen some pictures of Frank with it on, my skin was tingly, and my heart felt warm, but I still hurried off the boat. But I knew it was Mr. Pratt

Judy: Hi, Frank. We're taking care of her.

Mark: I think he was saying thank you  
That was something special I felt in her! I have had so many great experiences with her, and I met so many great people. And she just brings us together. And running her during race week and having the kids on her you know, going around where the parents are racing. I ran the boat and went around the course with the kids on the boat. So, the kids could, wave at their parents racing and stuff. I did that a couple race week times when we had kids here. That was what it was all about.

Judy: We don't have race week here anymore.

Mark: No, they quit that. it's sad. It's the Marina.  
You know, they wouldn't repair the lift that took boats in and out. The launch ramp is for launching seaplanes and not boats. So, I can't even really launch my boat there because my truck, my brakes, you half your trucks in the water. You can't even get out your door. You must climb out the window to get on the thing. So, I wish Oak Harbor would upgrade the

marina. At least make that ramp usable for boats and not seaplanes. But that's kind of really what killed it. And not enough water.

Judy: Yeah, I'm sorry about that.

Mark: Yeah.

Judy: So I have one other question. I did an oral history of John Stone, and he was the one that was taking kids out to educate them about sailing. So have you worked with him? I mean, you're taking kids out now. Suva is. Is there a link?

Mark: Just that John and I are great friends, and I saved his boat once. It broke off a mooring.

Judy: Okay.

Mark: So, it was floating out in the middle of the cove. And at that time, I had a bigger power boat, 22-foot, and I, I'm looking, I'm going, "oh, that's going sideways. I don't think that's right." So, I went out there and it was dragging in the mooring ball. So, I was able to get it and bring it in and tie it up to the fuel dock. But I've known John ever since I've been here. He's a great guy; I really love him. We almost bought the Captain Whidbey Inn instead of the Coupeville Inn. He and I and I were both on the same thing of empowering and getting kids out on the water. So, we kind of, our minds are in the same thing, you know, we did a couple sailing things together.

Judy: So, there is a connection.

Mark: Oh, yeah. He's a great friend.

Judy: Okay, good. Yeah.

Mark: Yeah, he's happy that I'm carrying on with what he's done with the kids, just like the other boat they had here on the dock years ago, the power boat, I believe Roger Sherman and others ran that program.

Judy: That's right. Roger Sherman and Ron Van Dyke.

Mark: Yeah, they did that.

Judy: They did that for years.

Mark: So, they did that on the Cutty Sark. And now Suva is doing that. So, it's great how our cove is kind of a hub of this, getting our kids out to be educated on the sea, it empowers them! It is so great! And again, to see how their eyes light up when they're at the helm of this 68-foot boat. You know, I love to get the kids out. You want to drive? Okay. Pull up a little stool and they'll drive. That's worth all of it. You know, that's worth all of it to see the face on the kids. People just get behind the helm. It's five minutes of driving her. So, you know, it's amazing. I still pinch myself.

Judy: Yeah, I bet.

Mark: And I live right across the cove, so when I'm at 4:30, I'm walking my dog on Monroe Landing Beach, near the beach on Monroe Landing, directly across the cove, there's rather Drive-in theater is off the highway. That road goes right to the beach. I live a block and a half, just up from the beach. So, I walked down to the beach every day with my dog at 4:30 or 5 o'clock, and on the way is schooner Suva out there. And I see her sailing that makes my heart glow!

Judy: Okay. And I live just down the road. I live on the beach. I live on Penn Cove Roa, around the corner from Three Sisters. So, I see Suva sailing. Because she's right out my front window. I know.

Mark: I know. We're all so lucky and so blessed.

Judy: Is there anything else that you can add?

Mark: You know, finding her and then the tenders that we got for her, that we had in the museum, you know, years back. We had her original tender here that was donated to us, or I think we bought her original tender. Then, there's one that was made as a reproduction that I think is the one that's in here. That's a reproduction. Her original one is in somebody's garage.

Judy: I took a picture of that, and I showed it to Vicki last week, and she said, "Oh, it looks like our tender."

Mark: Yeah. So then just finding all that, just the pieces of this puzzle, how they've all came together. Yeah, it has really

been super cool.

Judy: Yeah. She was meant to be here.

Mark: She was meant to be here.

Judy: And thank you for bringing her here, and for these memories.

Mark: You are so welcome. Yeah, my honor.